

Yung See San Fong  
16660 Cypress Way  
Los Gatos  
Santa Clara County  
California

HABS No. CA-2070

HABS,  
CAL,  
43-LOSGA,  
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Architectural and Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20243

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. CA-2070

YUNG SEE SAN FONG  
(The Young's Home in the Heart of the Hills)

Location: 16660 Cypress Way, Los Gatos, Santa Clara County, California.

USGS Los Gatos Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 10.592280.4119140.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: Mrs. Scotty A. McEwen.

Present Use: Private residence.

Significance: Nestled in the picturesque hills above Los Gatos is this unique and eclectic dwelling, a combination of Oriental decorative motifs and pagoda roofs together with western massing and lay-out. Yung See San Fong, "Young's Home in the Heart of the Hills," was completed in 1917 by Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young, a writer, and her husband, Sanborn Young, a gentleman farmer, conservationist and later California State Senator. The design of the house was inspired by a Chinese play, The Sweetmeat Game, which Mrs. Young had written.

Materials utilized in the house's construction include stucco, wooden shake shingles and board and batten siding, which provide an interesting composition. The interior boasts handcarved wooden panels with Chinese characters. Commanding a magnificent view of the Santa Clara Valley, this "bungahigh" is unique in Northern California. As the Youngs were prominent politically and civically, many well known people visited here including President Hoover.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1916-1917. In October 1916 Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young was deeded the tract of land from her mother. At about the same time the Youngs built a water tank and expanded their water supply by laying more pipe from their spring. This is substantiated in a deed, (Miscellaneous), Book 41, page 139, of October 1916, (but not recorded until September 15, 1920), of Mutual Water Agreement with their neighbors, Arthur Cox, et ux. Grantor: B.C.M. Young. Grantee: Arthur Cox, et ux. of 'Mutual agreement to reserve and preserve and continue rights to water flowing from said

spring." During this time the Youngs stayed at the hotel in Los Gatos as reported in the San Jose Mercury News of December 17, 1916. The date of the house is also substantiated by an interview with Ruth Comfort Mitchell in a local newspaper, (San Jose Mercury Herald, January 2, 1920), in which she states that the first Christmas spent in the Yung See Fong was 1917.

2. Architect, contractor, builder: Possibly Leo L. Nichols. Mrs. Board, caretaker and companion for nearly thirty years to the Youngs said that the builder was a man named Nichols, from Oakland. Mr. and Mrs. Young had several houses that he had built in the Oakland-Piedmont area and got him to be their contractor. Mrs. Board could also substantiate that Mr. Nichols visited Yung See San Fong. She reported that he said that he had come all the way from Oakland to see the house that he had built. He commented that a third story had been added to the main portion of the house. He said that the columns in the living room with the termite tracks design were not ordered that way. When these columns had arrived from the supplier he was very upset, but then realized they fit in harmoniously with the Oriental theme of the house. This same information about Nichols was recorded in McDaniels; manuscript supposedly being supplied by Sanborn Young. The Daily Pacific Builder listed from 1914-1916 several Nichols. However, the one that appears the most is Leo L. Nichols. The following listings are taken from the Daily Pacific Builder:

March 11, 1914.

L. L. Nichols, owner and contractor. Price \$3,500.  
E. Walker Ave. 50 N. Davidson Way, Oakland  
2-story, 7 room dwelling.  
Architect, none.  
L. L. Nichols is listed on MacDonough Street, Oakland, California.

June 15, 1914.

North Lake Park Avenue, 350 East Lake Shore Avenue,  
Oakland, no price given. 2-story, 8 room dwelling.  
Owner: D. H. Crokerton, 2014 Filbert, Oakland, California.  
Architect, none.  
Contractor, Leo L. Nichols, First Trust Building, Oakland, California.

September 1, 1915

North 40th - 100 E. Broadway, Oakland - Total cost:  
\$2,450. a-story frame dwelling.  
Owner: Mrs. M. E. Streiff, 4000 Broadway.  
Contractor: Leo L. Nichols, 1764 Broadway.

April 13, 1915

No. 1180 Eighth, Oakland, Alterations. Cost: \$1,415.  
Owner: F. E. Brigham.  
Contractor: Leo L. Nichols.

January 11, 1916

200 North Hopkins. Total cost: \$1,800.  
Owner: Estelle Nichols. 1-story, 5 rooms.  
Contractor: Leo L. Nichols

February 24, 1916

W. Magee Avenue. 235 No. Hopkins, Oakland. Total cost:  
\$1,900. 1-story, 5 rooms.  
Owner: Estelle H. Nichols, 2342 14th Avenue.  
Contractor: Leo L. Nichols.

In the Oakland Directory the following listings were provided by  
the Oakland Public Library.

1915 Leo L. Nichols, builder. Office, 1764 Broadway.  
Residence, 2342 14th Avenue, Oakland, California.  
1916 As above.  
1917 As above.  
1918 No Leo L. Nichols.  
1921 Leo L. Nichols, Carpenter. (No business address)  
Residence 992 East 24th Street.  
1928 Leo L. Nichols, (Estelle) builder.  
2044 High Street.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

Book of deed 448, page 440, October 19, 1916.

Grantor: Florence S. Mitchell.

Grantee: Ruth C. M. Young.

"A parcel of land as shown on the map of David & Cowell, Book B,  
page 28, Plot 7, containing 4.966 acres."

(Note: Florence Mitchell, Ruth's mother had inherited said  
property from Ruth's father, John Mitchell, who had purchased  
this parcel on April 15, 1887.) Ruth Comfort Mitchell- Young  
also bought several other adjacent parcels.

Book 452 (of deeds), page 314, March 8, 1917.

Grantor: Peter Danielson, et ux.

Grantee: Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young.

"A parcel of land containing 1.053 acres"

Book of Deeds 476, page 247. July 30, 1918.

Grantor: Peter Danielsen.

Grantee: Ruth C. M. Young.

"A parcel of land containing 1.6 acres."

Upon her demise in February 1954, the will stipulated that her husband, Sanborn Young could reside in the house until his death. He died February 1964. The bulk of her estate was inherited by four relatives.

Book 7002, page 306. June 16, 1965.

Grantors: Chapin Mitchell, Merlyn Jane Mitchell Talbot, Barbara B. Mitchell and Mowatt Mitchell.

Grantee: Clyde A. and Alice B. Taughinbaugh.

He purchased six parcels of land as above and additional parcels containing 7.644 acres in all. Taughinbaugh subsequently subdivided the Young property.

Book 0091 Official Records, page 92. October 20, 1972.

Grantor: Clyde A. Taughinbaugh.

Grantees: Neil S. and Joyce R. Livingston.

"All of parcel 2, as shown on that certain map, Parcel Map."

Book 309, page 56 of October 4, 1972. Containing 4.641 acres.

Book 420, page 250. May 21, 1975.

Grantor: Neil S. and Joyce R. Livingston.

Grantee: Scotty McEwen.

4. Builder, contractor: McDaniel's notes stated that since unions were creating troubles at the time, non-union labor was used in building the house. He also noted that the carved wood decoration in the interior was supplied by craftsmen from China Town in San Francisco or directly from China.
5. Notes on original plan and construction: No existing plans.
6. Alterations and additions: The bedroom wing on the right of the main section of the house was added in 1922 when Sanborn Young's mother came to live with them. At the same time the main section of the house was raised one story, (making four), to incorporate a sun room. A more accentuated pagoda roof capped the main section.

In 1965 the Taughinbaughs added the large picture window in the livingroom to take advantage of the view. The dining area on the porch was also permanently enclosed. The rest of the changes in the house have been minor.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The lives and lifestyle of the Youngs, who built "Yung See San Fong" provide an interesting insight into bygone days. Ruth Comfort Mitchell was born in San Francisco in 1882. Summers were spent in Los Gatos,

where her parents and grandparents had summer homes. At the age of fourteen her first poem was published in the Los Gatos Mail newspaper, thus launching her literary career, which continued throughout her lifetime.

In 1914 literary friends in San Francisco introduced Ruth Comfort Mitchell to Sanborn Young. A native of Chicago and a graduate of Northwestern University, Young had recently sold his grain business and was traveling. The couple were married in October 1914 in the Grand Canyon and moved to New York, where Ruth continued her literary pursuits, and he studied photography.

In 1916 her play "The Sweetmeat Game" opened at the Palace Theatre on Broadway starring Olive Wyndham. With a Chinese setting the successful play toured the Orpheum circuit around the country for two years. It is not surprising that Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young chose a Chinese theme for her play as her family had a Chinese cook during her youth and several rooms of their home were decorated in the oriental style.

Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young had always loved Los Gatos and in 1916 the Youngs started building "Yung See San Fong" (The Youngs Home in the Heart of the Hills) on property granted to them by her parents. Her recent Broadway play, "The Sweetmeat Game" "gave her the idea of mingling the best of oriental tastes and usages with her conception of beauty and comfort in the building and furnishing of her home." (Ona E. Smith, "Yung See San Fong," Sunset Magazine, December 1918, p. 49.) Furthermore, "instead of a bungalow, she wanted a bungahigh" (David McDaniel. Manuscript Collection on Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young, Part 2, chapter 3, unnumbered).

Chinese traditions were adhered to as exemplified by the winding road, which was supposed to deter the devil from finding the house. A statue of the Chinese God of Rice and Plenty still greets visitors at the main entrance.

In the interior, Chinese motifs were used in both design and furnishings. In the living room "across the eastern wall runs the fireplace encased in wood and carving from the Orient. The trim was specially carved by hand in China to the order of the Youngs from merchants in Chinatown." (McDaniels, op. cit, unnumbered) Handcarved wooden panels with Chinese characters are above the doors. The lighting is "from concealed overhead lights in inverted coolie hats, on which are sketched the characters in Chinese of "Yung See San Fong." (Smith, Sunset, op cit., p. 50).

The rooms were furnished with Chinoiserie hand carved teakwood tables and chairs, prints, embroideries and objects d'art. The dining room, which was screened in the summer and had glass windows in the winter, had woven sea grass seat furniture, which was very stylish at the time.

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Rose-medallion china and pottery were imported from China. The sterling silver flatware was monogrammed with the Chinese figures for Young. The main color accent was green, a special color in Chinese folklore. Mrs. Young was also a devotee of green - her clothes, ink, stationery, jewelry and book bindings, all being green.

Yung See San Fong was basically a self-sustaining farm where vegetables and poultry were raised. In an interview, Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young stated "we raise everything we eat but the staple groceries and the fillet mignon." (McDaniel papers, San Francisco Evening World, February 24, 1922 "Ruth Comfort Mitchess tells why she writes novels about young lovers," unnumbered.) A Chinese man, Gim, directed the household until the late 1920s. His activities included cooking the meals, planting the gardens, milking the cows, and assisting with the interior decoration.

Most of the outbuildings remain today. To the southwest of the house is the stable and barn. Adjacent to the house is the garage with an apartment above. Near the garage is a cave for keeping perishables, which has painted chinese figures "here we keep the milk." (Unfortunately, when the property was subdivided, a new road above the cave resulted in its collapse, but the colorful entrance remains.) Further up on the hill was the overseer's cottage, which has been greatly expanded by its present owners. Also, further up on the hillside was located Mrs. Young's cabin, where she did her writing.

When she was not writing or lecturing, Mrs. Young and her husband rode their horses around the numerous trails in the area. The Youngs are reputed to have ridden as far as Big Sur. The Youngs also had many dogs, who even had their own swimming pool. Mr. Young raised beagles and racing dogs.

Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young wrote novels, poems, short stories and plays. Her publishers included Appleton, McCall's, Century Company, Cromwell and Bobbs Merrill. Because of her fame, many of the and Bobbs Merrill. Because of her fame, many of the literati visited Yung See San Fong. The Los Gatos Mail News of April 6, 1922, reported that "Robert W. Service, noted writer of Alaskan stories and poetry visited Yung See San Fong." An invitation from the noted California writer, Gertrude Atherton to a party in honor of Gertrude Stein is in the McDaniel papers. Another California writer that she was friendly with was Mrs. Fremont Older, who resided in nearby Cupertino (Recorded by HABS, see HABS No. CA-2007.) At the annual Los Gatos Pageant in 1920 "Mrs. Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young and Mrs. Fremont Older were among the notables present." (P. Butler, Valley of Santa Clara Manuscript collection, Stanford University, Xerox from unmarked sources.) Mrs. Young was very involved with the Los Gatos Pageant, the Los Gatos Christian Church, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Los Gatos History Club.

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Both the Youngs were involved in Republican politics. Mrs. Young served as Republican National Committeewoman from California for eight years and as National and State President of Pro-America, an organization of Republican women founded in 1933.

Sanborn Young devoted his energies to politics, photography, raising racing dogs and beagles and investments. In 1925 Young was elected a California State Senator and continued to serve until 1938. A quiet, retiring man, it is said that he won the seat because of his wife's campaigning. While in the Senate his primary interests were the conservation of wild animals, and narcotics. In 1929 his bill to abolish saw tooth traps except for bears was enacted.

In the State Senate he was head of the Narcotics Committee and introduced legislation to control narcotics. Because of his expertise President Herbert Hoover appointed Young as one of the United States delegates to the International Conference for the Limitation of the Manufacture of Drugs in 1931, which was held in Geneva, Switzerland. Attended by fifty-five nations the resulting treaty was partially drafted by Young.

These political ties resulted in the Youngs becoming friends of the Hoovers, who resided in nearby Palo Alto. Several letters from Hoover to the Youngs indicate that theirs was a close relationship.

Sanborn Young said "my only claim to fame is that I married Ruth Comfort Mitchell, I became a California State Senator and wrote the narcotics Bill, I raised the champion beagle." (McDaniel papers, op. cit.)

The Youngs preferred entertaining on a small scale. Among those who frequented Yung See San Fong were Joan and Constance Bennett, the movie stars. (McDaniel papers, op. cit.) (A photograph album of the Youngs, which remained at Yung See San Fong has disappeared.) Their circle of friends also included Senator James Duval Phelan, a one time mayor of San Francisco and U.S. State Senator, whose nearby residence, Villa Montalvo, (HABS-1977), was the gathering place for the socially prominent, political and literary notables. Phelan signed the Yung See San Fong Guest book on June 1920. William D. Stephens, governor of California signed it on June 8, 1920 (McDaniel Papers, op. cit.)

In February 1954, Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young was found dead in the bath tub. Ten years later at the age of 90, Sanborn Young died. Relatives of Mrs. Young had a house sale, and nothing remains of the original furnishings or possessions.

Prepared by: Sibyl McCormac Groff  
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Santa Clara County HABS Team  
Summer 1979



PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural merit and interest: A house inspired by Chinese architecture, Yung See San Fong is an eclectic mixture of eastern decorative motifs and roof shape and western massing and plan lay-out. The house was a notable gathering place for local and international celebrities in the early twentieth century.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The first floor plan is a basic rectangle of 27' x 74'. There is a rectangular addition at the first floor (added at a skew angle to the rectangle described) that measures 16'-4" x 30'. The house has no bay system. At its tallest point, the house has four floors, and at its lowest, two floors. The narrow, rectangular shape of the house parallels the contours of the steep grade.
2. Foundations: The foundations are concrete and brick, and wooden posts anchored in concrete footings.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The variegated walls exhibit a range of textures and colors including frame walls finished with stucco, board and batten siding, wooden shake shingles on frame and some raw wooden columns.
4. Structural system, framing: The house is an example of light wooden framing including wooden studs, joists and rafters.
5. Porches, stoops and bulkheads: There is a rock bulkhead approximately four feet high adjacent to the south front of the house, dividing the entrance road level from the concrete and wooden plank terrace at the first floor level. There is a terrace at the north, immediately adjacent to the living room that is made of wooden tongue-and-groove planking 3 1/2" wide. Wooden steps at the east end of this terrace lead down to the basement level and other wooden decks below. The wooden deck at the northeast wall of the guest house addition is made of tongue-and-groove planking. The north terrace includes a wooden guardrail of Chinese design and five posts. There are glazed ceramic medallions of Chinese design at the center of each of the divisions of the balustrade. A simpler wooden balustrade is included on the wooden terrace

at the northeast wall. Wooden platforms sit above the concrete at the main entrance door and at the Buddha figure, "a god of rice and plenty," at the south front. There are similar plank walls and stairs adjacent to the easternmost entrance on the south.

6. Chimneys: There are two chimneys in the original house. One picturesque chimney vents the flue from the kitchen and is exaggerated in height. The chimney is stuccoed and is capped with a shaked overhanging roof of Chinese design which has a ridge beam that continues out past the roof at both ends. The ridge beam is flared and assumes a decorative Chinese profile at its ends. The chimney that vents the living room fireplace is similarly exaggerated and picturesque and has details that are similar to the chimney just described. Both of these chimneys have been pierced with modern metal louvers. The fireplace chimney in the bedroom of the added guest wing is stuccoed and has a simple stuccoed cap.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The doors at the south front include the utility room door, which is wooden and has one light over one panel, and the main entrance door which is four feet wide and is of solid wood. The front door is stained a dark brown. The easternmost door at the front is a wooden door with ten glass lights arranged in two rows. Both the utility room door and the easternmost entrance door have modern screen doors before them. All these doors have wooden jambs, sills and thresholds and are surrounded by plain trim. On the north wall the door from the dining room to the terrace is a wooden door with one light above one panel. A similar door leads from the living room to the terrace. At the basement level, there are three doors of this design exhibiting the same trim, sill and jamb details.
  - b. Windows and shutters: The typical window at Yung See San Fong is a hinged casement window opening out. There is a Chinese design to the muntins, the window is divided into three equal parts horizontally with a square pane of glass interrupting that pattern at opposite ends of the casement. This typical window may occur singly or in pairs or in assemblages of four panels. The windows have brass hinges and brass latches halfway up their height. Windows at the living room, library and at one kitchen location (replacing an original Chinese design window) are fixed glass panes in wood frames. The four fixed glass panels of the living room are approximately 4'-3" wide and 6'-3" high, and replace smaller windows of

Chinese design that were once in that wall. The dining room windows are glass in wooden frames; some are hinged and some fixed. The windows of the sleeping porch are glass in wooden frames that operate either on tracks (the frames slide in the tracks) or as awning windows.

8. Roof shape and covering: The roofs at Yung See San Fong are constructed in such a way as to affect Chinese temple roof shapes. The one-story portion of the house has a gable roof with exaggerated splayed overhangs, characteristic of Chinese architecture. The ridge beam extends past the end of the gable and becomes flared and assumes a Chinese decorative profile at its ends. In the eaves, the rafter ends are exposed and have an extension with a curved bottom that flips the eave upward from the house, producing the familiar Chinese roof profile. The sheathing above the rafters is visible from below. These roofs are covered with wooden shakes. The three-story portion of the house has roofs that affect pagoda massing. The roof of the stair landing has an enormous flared eave made of flush siding. The board that masks the joists at the top of the eave is curved; the high points of the eave are at its ends. A delicate Chinese frieze occurs at the base of the eave. The roof that caps the second story was at one time a hip roof with gable ends perpendicular to the ridge line and has the decorative ridge beam. All these roofs, with the exception of the roof of the stair landing are covered with wooden shakes. The roofs of the small porches and of the utility room addition are built-up roofs.
9. Decorative features and trim: There are decorative plaques on the trim of the entrance door. They are made of split bamboo, and the Chinese characters on them entreat "... the guest who is about to enter to bring with him the purity of the moonlight and the warmth of the sun and the chorus of nature's beauty." Likewise, between each of the windows of the stair landing, there are plaques with Chinese characters which bid a welcome to guests.

#### C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: The front door leads directly into the living room and is opposite a large plate glass window in the north wall that is flanked by two columns. Through the window is a panoramic view of the Santa Clara Valley. Just east of the front entrance are the stairs leading to the second floor. In the east wall of the living room an opening flanked by two columns leads to a passage from which a library and a sleeping porch open to the north. At the end of the passage is a square hall with a south door to the outside and the door to a bathroom in its west wall. The east wall of this hall has a large opening flanked by two decorative niches. Through the opening, a short passage skewed at an angle

from the main axis of the house leads to the guest wing, which is sited at that same angle. In the guest room there is a large fireplace on the southwest wall. Two doors in the northeast wall lead to an outside deck, and doors in the northwest wall lead to a bathroom and a large closet.

Returning to the living room, the south wall has a large raised fireplace above a raised hearth flanking the entrance, and the west wall has a central opening flanked by two columns. Beyond the opening, a door leads north to the dining room, and another door leads south to the kitchen. The west wall of the living room has cabinets south of the opening and, north of it, paired doors which formerly led to a porch but now lead to the dining room. In the west wall of the kitchen is the door to the utility room. The utility room has an outside south entrance and stairs descending north to the basement.

There are basement apartments beneath both the original part of the house and the guest wing addition. Both have bathrooms. The second floor is reached via the stairs just east of the main entrance door. Facing the top of the stairs are two doors leading to bedrooms of the same size. To the east is the door to a bathroom, and to the west a door leads to the dog-leg stairs to the third floor, which consists of a single room ("sun room") from which extensive views which extensive views may be seen. There are windows on all four sides of the "sun room."

2. Stairways: There is a dog-leg stairway from the first floor to the second. The first run ascends south in ten risers, and the second run ascends north nine risers. The treads are nearly a foot wide. The decorative column at the base of the stair takes the place of a newel post. The column is ornamentally marked by natural termite tracks. A decorative Chinese parapet flanking the west side of the lower run bears raised Chinese characters on two panels framed in geometric fretwork. The characters are on fourteen circular inset plaques and signify the names of the celestial gods and goddesses who preside over the household. The stair landing contains a bench extending its full width. Above the bench are three windows with muntins set in a Chinese pattern. The posts of the stairs are chamfered, and the balustrade has wooden vertical and horizontal members arranged in a Chinese design.

The wooden stairs from the basement to the utility room ascend south 14 risers and have simple nosings. The dog-leg stairway from the second floor to the third-floor sun room was added when that room was built and is not as decorative as the stairway below it. The first run ascends west three risers; the second run ascends east 11 risers. The balustrade at the third-floor level has a chamfered newel post and horizontal

and vertical members arranged in a decorative Chinese pattern. There are three sets of external wooden steps leading from the ground to, respectively, a basement entrance at a northeast angle of the house, a deck outside the north side of the living room, and a deck outside the southeast hall.

3. Flooring: As the wooden floors are carpeted wall-to-wall, the size of their planking has not been determined. The kitchen floor is covered by linoleum. The basement floors are concrete.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The kitchen walls are papered. The dining room walls have a decorative wainscot rising two-thirds the height of the walls. The living room has wall paper rising two-thirds the height of the walls and terminating at a band of carved wooden fretwork. Above the ban, which surrounds the room, is a plaster wall. The ceiling is plastered.
5. Doorways and doors: The door and window surrounds are delicately carved with an interlocking geometric Chinese fret pattern. The interior doors are wooden and have two panels -- a small panel above a large one. The major openings of the living room are flanked by decorative columns incised by the paths of termites. The north and south columns support shallow lintels; those on the east and west walls support blocks.
6. Decorative features and trim: The hearth area is within an alcove and is asymmetrical. A low, wide wooden base, its top surface inlaid in geometric parquetry, extends from the column just west of the entrance to beyond the firewood closet flanking the west side of the fireplace. One wooden riser above that base, a tiled narrower L-shaped hearth extends in front of the fireplace and firewood closet and wraps around the east end of the chimney. The fireplace itself is raised above the hearth and is screened both by metallic mesh and by folding glass doors. Two rows of the same kind of 6" x 6" greenish-gray tile that paves the hearth face the fireplace to the height of the firewood closet door. A mantel shelf supported by carved and pierced brackets and edged with carved Chinese fretwork extends across the combined width of fireplace and closet, and wraps around the east end of the chimney. Below the mantel shelf, there are delicately carved gilded and polychromed panels inset between the brackets, a rectangular panel flanked by two square panels over the fireplace, and a shorter rectangular panel over the firewood closet door. The carved motifs represent birds, fish, flowers, baskets, vases, and geometric devices. Above the mantel shelf, a larger carved and gilded polychromed panel centered over the fireplace and flanked by plain paneling represents bats, flowers, and cloud motifs around a cartouche bearing four Chinese ideograms signifying (right to left) Yang Shih Shan Fang (Yung See San Fong) meaning "Yang clan

mountain building" ("Young's home in the heart of the hills"). A Chinese palace lantern hangs just west of the firewood closet but outside the hearth alcove. The column-flanked east and west portals of the living room are also ornamented by inserted carved and pierced gilded and ploychromed work spanning their openings. These elements occupy the uppermost quarter of each portal and are in the form of spandrel-supported yoke-shaped arches. Their motifs include birds and flowers.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is on a mountainous site. The entrance front faces south.
2. Historic landscape design: Rock terraces and bulkheads are employed around the house to form the land and make usable flat surfaces on the mountainside. There are three groupings of very old trees around the house.
3. Outbuildings: The garage is adjacent to the house and displays the same Chinese inspiration as Yung See San Fong. Although altered and jacked up on a new foundation, the garage has the familiar pagoda roof profile with flared and skirted corners. A caretaker's house and a board and batten barn are also on the property.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Interviews:

Mr. John Baggerly, Los Gatos. He is a long time resident of Los Gatos, and his relatives and he knew the Youngs.

Mrs. William Board, currently of Fresno, California. She and her husband resided at Yung See San Fong from 1925-1954, where he was the caretaker and she was Mrs. Young's companion. A great deal of this report is based on her clear and precise information--by telephone July and August 1979, 209-431-0734, and interview August 1979.

Mrs. Scotty McEwen, Current owner. Interviewed there in July and August 1979.

Mrs. Eleanor Sorenson, 361 Penn. Avenue, Los Gatos. She grew up in the adjacent property to the Youngs and has pleasant childhood memories of the Youngs. July 1979, telephone conversation, 408-354-8451.

Mr. Clyde A. Taughinbaugh, former owner, who purchased Yung See San Fong upon the demise of Sanborn Young in 1965. He subsequently divided the parcel of land and lives in the former caretaker's cottage. Interviewed at Mrs. McEwen's July 1979.

B. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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Santa Clara County Recorders Office. Deeds, General Records, Miscellaneous records, Maps, Tax Assessments, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California.

Santa Clara County, Office of County Clerk, Probates, 191 North First Street, San Jose, California.

McDaniel, David. Manuscript Collection on Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young. San Jose Public Library, 180 West San Carlos, San Jose, California.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Bruntz, George G. The History of Los Gatos Valley. Valley Publishers, Fresno, California. 1971.

California Blue Books. 1932.

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Hirsheimee, Jim. "California Today - The Orient Expression." San Jose Mercury News, October 8, 1978, pp. 30-31.

Los Gatos News. (Newspaper 1912-1917, on microfilm at Los Gatos Public Library, 110 East Main Street, Los Gatos, California. February 18, 19, 1954 and February 17, 1964. No pages.

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New York World Telegram, Ruth Comfort Mitchell's obituary, February 9, 1954, no page.

Oakland Telephone Directories 1910-1930 (broken). Oakland Public Library.

San Francisco Evening World. February 24, 1922.

San Jose Mercury Herald. January 20, 1918; January 20, 1922;  
October 1, 1939; February 18, 1954. No page numbers.

San Francisco Chronicle, February 19, 1954, page 2.

Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission. Santa Clara  
Heritage Resource Inventory, 1975, revised 1979.

(Note: The following source is not accurate).

Young, Professor Deward H. (compiler), Our Young Family in America.  
Durham, North Carolina: Published by several Youngs including  
Sanborn and Ruth Young, 1947. (Dedication poem in Our Young  
Family . . . was written by Ruth Comfort Mitchell Young.)

3. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Leo L. Nichols - The Oakland and Piedmont building permits exist  
back to 1906.

Prepared by: Sibyl McCormac Groff  
Supervisor  
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Summer 1979

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the County of Santa Clara. The 1979 summer project, the last of a three-year recording project in Santa Clara County, was completed under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect; and Sibyl McCormac Groff, Project Supervisor (Columbia University); with David Schaaf, Architectural foreman (Carnegie-Mellon University); Jan Cigliano (Oberlin College); and student architects William Coppa (University of Virginia), Jon Lourie (University of Maryland), Anne Munly (Princeton University), John Murphy (Texas Tech University), and Matthew Poe (Virginia Polytechnic University), at the HABS Field Office in Santa Clara, California. The drawings were edited in the HABS Washington Office in the summer of 1979 by architect David Schaaf. The historical and architectural data were edited by Jan Cigliano and Denys Peter Myers, architectural historians on the HABS staff in 1979 and 1981, respectively. Photographs were taken by photographer Jane Lidz in the summer of 1980.